

A House Leader Says He Accepts Data on Cubans

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, June 5—Admiral Stansfield Turner, the Director of Central Intelligence, presented evidence to the House Intelligence Committee today that appeared to have satisfied its chairman that President Carter was justified in asserting that Cuba had trained and equipped Katangan rebels and knew in advance of their attack on Zaire from Angola last month. The charge has repeatedly been denied by Cuban leaders.

Representative Edward P. Boland, Democrat of Massachusetts, the committee chairman, told reporters after a two-hour closed-door briefing: "I'm satisfied, and the committee itself is satisfied, that the President's statement was correct."

The Administration has not yet made public its purported data, but instead has begun a campaign of briefing key members and committees of Congress on its contents. Mr. Boland said that Admiral Turner had presented evidence from "prisoners, diplomats and persons surrounding Zaire itself."

'We Have Sufficient Evidence'

Meanwhile, representatives of the United States, France, Britain, West Germany and Belgium argued late into the night in Paris over the best way to stabilize Zaire without becoming involved in African rivalries or generating a new East-West confrontation. [Page A7] And King Hassan II of Morocco, who sent peace-keeping troops to Zaire last night, vowed to "intervene in Zaire again and even a third and a fourth time" to help protect it from further attacks by insurgents based in Angola. [Page A8]

Admiral Turner, speaking to reporters, was cautious in describing the evidence. "It is my considered opinion," he said, "that we have sufficient evidence to draw the conclusion that there must have been Cuban involvement in the training and equipping of these insurgent forces which attacked the Government of Zaire last May 13."

"We made a careful, objective evaluation of this—no intelligence conclusion is ever absolutely black and absolutely white," Admiral Turner said. "But when you have a preponderance of evidence as we do in this case from a variety of sources over a period of time, one can only come to the kind of conclusion that we did."

President Fidel Castro and other Cuban

leaders have denied any recent involvement with the rebels, who had fled to Angola from Shaba Province, formerly called Katanga.

Whether Cubans played an active role in aiding the Katangans is important, because much of the Administration's African policy in recent weeks has been based on the assumption that the Cubans and Russians were causing trouble for Zaire.

Mr. Carter said at a news conference in Chicago on May 25 that Angola had to bear a heavy responsibility for the "deadly attack" on Shaba, "and it is a burden and a responsibility shared by Cuba."

"We believe," the President said at that time, "that Cuba has known of the Katangan plans to invade and obviously did nothing to restrain them from crossing the border. We also know that the Cubans have played a key role in training and equipping the Katangans who attacked."

McGovern Tells Cuban Version

Senator George S. McGovern, Democrat of South Dakota, who has publicly drawn attention to the discrepancy between Mr. Carter's and Mr. Castro's statements, said today that he had been told by the Cubans that their involvement with the Katangans ended two years ago.

Mr. McGovern said the Cubans asserted that they had trained and equipped the Katangans only to help them fight on the side of the winning forces in the Angolan civil war, led by President Agostinho Neto. According to Mr. McGovern, the Cubans said that since then they had had nothing to do with the Katangese. But Mr. Boland said the information provided to the committee showed that the Cubans' training had taken place as recently as the past year.

Mr. McGovern, who has not yet been briefed on the Administration's data, said that if he was convinced the Cubans were lying, he would regard it as a "personal insult."

Some Administration officials are not satisfied with the quality of the intelligence. They have said privately that the reliability of many of the informants was dubious, and that much of the data was "circumstantial."

'Proof Is There,' O'Neill Says

An Administration official said that it had been decided to brief the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last, on the ground that that group would be the most critical. The first briefing was at the White House last Friday and involved Congressional leaders such as the House Speaker, Thomas P. O'Neill Jr., Democrat of Massachusetts, who commented today: "I would say that the proof is there that Cubans participated in Zaire." He also said he understood that the Central Intelligence Agency had photographs of Cubans with Katangans.

But the Administration has never asserted that Cubans actually crossed over into Zaire from Angola, and Admiral Turner, when asked about Mr. O'Neill's comment, said: "This Government made no such statement that Cubans were in Zaire or they were not. The evidence is not that clear one way or the other."

President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire said the Cubans were responsible for the attack.